BY EMMA MARSHALL,

Author of "Eaglehurst Towers," etc., etc.

"My dear, your mother knows nothing of the world." p. 34.

CHAPTER III.

PERSUASION.

Mrs. Armytage was alone the next day, when Miss Barker was announced. She came swiftly in and surprised Mrs. Armytage by a kiss.

"I feel as if I must come and talk to you about dear Mag. You know what a delightful plan I have made for her. It seems quite wonderful that it should have turned up just when it did. I hope you are pleased, dear Mrs. Armytage."

Mrs. Armytage was anything but pleased to be thus suddenly called upon to express an opinion about Maggie. Mothers do not generally like to have plans made for their children without their knowledge, much more without their consent, and Mrs. Armytage was on the defensive.

"I have not sufficiently considered the proposal you made to Margaret, and must, as I told her last night, take time to decide."

"Oh! but the delay may be fatal. My aunt says her friend, Lady Highmore, will not wait. Some one else is in the field, but my aunt has prevailed on her to wait before she decides, so that Mag may have the chance. Of course, *I* have pressed it, and you know what I should say if asked about Mag. I think her so perfectly charming and so clever—so far, far beyond the ordinary girl of country places like our little Besthorpe; she does so thirst after greater advantages. Now, dear Mrs. Armytage, I am quite unselfish, for when Mag goes I shall not have a creature to exchange ideas with, and I shall be desolate; so do give me credit for the best intentions."

Mrs. Armytage was not a person to be taken captive by Lisa Barker's wiles. When she paused to take breath, Mrs. Armytage quietly asked,

"What duties would be required of Margaret?"

"Oh! very trifling duties; just to take the daughter, Miss Highmore, to the lectures on literature and political economy, and physiology, and to work them up with her, and gain everything herself at the same time. Lady Highmore lives in De Vere Gardens; they will drive every day to the Queen's College. And there will be recreation, too. It won't be *all* work and no play for dear Mag," and Miss Barker put her head on one side and looked archly into the grave maternal face. "You know girls like us *do* like a little fun, though we make self-improvement and culture our chief aim. Then—of course it is a minor consideration—but it is a good salary, a hundred a year; and Mag is so devoted as a daughter that she takes that into consideration on *your* account and the children's."

Mrs. Armytage drew herself up at this ending of Lisa Barker's pleading; she did not relish having her circumstances discussed by Maggie's friend. She said quietly—

"I desire my children's happiness above everything, and if I can convince myself that this scheme will promote Margaret's welfare I will agree to it; but I should like to know more of this Lady Highmore. Is she likely to have a good influence over Maggie?"

"Influence! why, she is a woman of good position and

family, and, I believe, a charitable person. She is in the best society, literary and otherwise."

Miss Barker was really drawing the bow at a venture, but she could always colour a picture from imagination.

"I was not thinking of position or society," Mrs. Armytage said. "My children have led pure and, hitherto, happy lives, pleased with simple pleasures, and, I hope, brought up in the old paths, from which, as I sometimes hear, so many are straying in these days. Sunday visiting and neglect of the outward observances of religion would be very dangerous for a girl like Maggie."

"Oh! I know Mag so well," was the reply; "she would do what you wish in these matters. Of course they are not to *me* of such vast importance, and culture and the study of the Past in the light of the Present *does* shake one a little in the traditions of childhood."

"Traditions!" Mrs. Armytage repeated the word. "No, Miss Barker, I cannot call the verities of our faith traditions; and I dare not say that Maggie, placed in an atmosphere of indifference, if not of unbelief, might not fall away from the truth as it is in Christ."

"Oh dear! we are getting so serious, Mrs. Armytage; you must make an allowance for young things, and especially those who have cultivated such gifts as are bestowed on them. But now *do* promise to let Maggie write to-night to Lady Highmore, and I will write to my aunt by the same post, and say it is a settled thing, and Mag will go as soon as they want her, dear Mrs. Armytage!" And Lisa knelt down by Mrs. Armytage's chair and caressed her hand, and assumed her most fascinating smile.

"You are very kind, Miss Barker."

"Now *do* call me Lisa, please. I can't bear to be on formal terms with Mag's mother."

How long this siege which Miss Barker was laying to Mrs. Armytage's better judgment might have lasted I cannot say, had not the door opened quickly and Bernard come rushing in.

"Mother, little Tommy Turner has been and scalded himself dreadful; Kitty has come up to tell Sarah. They can't find Doctor Grey, and they are in such a state. Kitty is crying, and Sarah can hardly make out what she says; *do* come."

Mrs. Armytage rose at once and hastened to the kitchen, leaving Lisa Barker in her lowly position by her chair.

Kitty was crying and sobbing, and saying her father and mother had scolded her and said it was all her fault; but she had the baby to mind, and Tommy would go to the fire, and said he wanted a drop of the soup that was being "hotted" for father, and he would catch hold of the saucepan-handle, and then it all flew over him, and mother slapped her and father was very angry.

"Quick, Sarah, get some cotton wool and scrape a quantity of whiting from the ceiling, while I put on my bonnet. I know what to do till Mr. Grey comes."

Lisa Barker had by this time come out into the little hall, and now stepped into the kitchen—

"I am afraid you were a very careless girl," she said to poor sobbing Kitty, "and I don't wonder your parents were angry; I daresay you were not looking after your poor little brother at all, but thinking of something else. You are a very naughty girl."

"I *ain't*," Kitty said. "It's too hard on me to be on the trot all day, and father ill and mother out at laundry-work, and I've to cook and——"

"Now, Kitty," Mrs. Armytage said, "let me come and see what I can do for Tommy. Stop crying, it does no good."

Miss Barker expected to be asked to follow Mrs. Armytage, but she only said, extending her hand—

"Good-bye, Miss Barker, I will think over what you have said, and let you know."

At the gate Lisa met three of the girls returning from their morning walk. Elsie had left them and gone to the Turners' cottage with Mrs. Armytage.

"Run on and get ready for dinner, Heartsease and Elfin," Mag exclaimed. "Well," she said eagerly, "what did mother say?"

"Oh! just what I expected; all the old-fashioned notions about worldly society and duty, and that sort of thing. My dear, your mother knows nothing of the world, or the progress which carries every one with it who thinks at all. You must try to get round your mother. I believe I should have got round her if that tiresome little plague, Bernard, had not come in with the news of Tommy Turner's scald. One would have thought your career was more important than a child's sore finger."

Lisa Barker was very fond of that word "career." She spoke of it in a tone which implied it was a grand thing, forgetting that there are two "careers" possible to every one. And it is not those who seek one with flags flying and the plaudits of onlookers who most generally succeed in shaping for themselves a "grand career." The humble and quiet workers, of whom the world takes but little notice, who take up duty wherever it lies and perform it faithfully, are those whose "career" is most likely to be for their own good and for the good of others, here and hereafter.

Maggie's loyal heart always rose up in defence of her mother, to whom she was really deeply attached, and the one thing which jarred in her intercourse with Miss Barker was the disparaging way in which she sometimes spoke of Mrs. Armytage.

"It is because she cannot remember her own mother," Maggie would say in excuse; "she cannot understand how beautiful a mother's love is."

"Well, dear," Miss Barker said, "the letter accepting or declining must be posted to-morrow at the latest. Even then the Highmores may have closed with someone else; there is nothing like striking when the iron is hot. I wish Lady Highmore could *see* you; that would decide her at once—your face shows so plainly what you are. It is just alive with intellect and kindling with enthusiasm."

I suppose none of us are insensible to flattery, but this was a little too strongly put.

"Nonsense!" Maggie said, sharply. "It is very kind of you, Lisa, to think so well of me and to recommend me to Lady Highmore; but I think I shall give it up. I could not do anything against my mother's will."

"But it won't be against her will; she will come round, if you are judicious."

And she added—

"If you really care about it—which I begin to doubt, I should not have taken so much trouble about you if you had not said a hundred times that you wanted to get away from this dull place, and widen your sphere. Now, good-bye, dear. I must not stay, for father is coming back to luncheon."

Miss Barker tripped away and was soon out of sight, leaving Maggie by the gate, vexed that she had offended her, and more perplexed than ever about her future. As she leaned on the gate she rehearsed all that had passed in her mind, and, by degrees, the old longing came back, and the desire for something beyond the daily routine of life in the little village reasserted itself.

"Some mothers would be glad to have a daughter full of enterprise and eager to improve her position; but our mother is so content herself, and so good. I am not like her, and I never, never shall be."

Then Maggie brushed away two inconvenient tears, and started to see Mr. Grey coming towards the gate.

"Have you seen my mother?" she asked; "she is gone down to Turner's cottage where a child has been badly scalded."

"Yes," said Bernard, who had been nearer Maggie than she knew, engaged in collecting a quantity of brown caterpillars from under a rose bush and putting them into an old chocolate box. "Yes, Tommy Turner is nearly scalded to death, and they want you, Mr. Grey; they have been hunting the village for you, so Sarah says."

"As you are hunting those poor caterpillars—'smuddering' them, as you said I 'smuddered' you in the hay. But I must go at once."

"I will come with you," Maggie said, "and see if mother wants anything fetched for the child."

"You needn't go, Mag," Bernard shouted; "Elsie is gone."

But Maggie turned a deaf ear to this and walked away with Mr. Grey.

"Mr. Grey," she said, "I am so puzzled to know what to do. I wish you would advise me. . . . Lisa Barker has heard of such a splendid thing for me in London. I am to be governess-companion to a young lady, attend lectures, have heaps of advantages; and," she added, with rising colour, "a hundred pounds a-year! That is a fortune to us; for, of course, I should send mother the greater part of it."

"Well," Mr. Grey said, "where is the difficulty?"

"Mother is the difficulty. She does not like the plan. Isn't it odd? It is not as if I were the only girl; there is Elsie next me in age. Surely we are not all wanted here?"

"You are the eldest, and——" Mr. Grey was going to add, the cleverest; but, unlike Lisa Barker, he never dealt in flattering speeches.

"Yes, I am the eldest, and that seems the best reason for my leaving home."

"Perhaps Mrs. Armytage thinks differently. She may think that is the best reason for your staying with her."

"Oh, I see!" Maggie said, impatiently. "You don't understand; I thought you would; but never mind."

Mr. Grey caught sight of her generally bright face clouded over; and surely that was a tear on the long, dark lashes. He felt great sympathy with Maggie.

He knew something himself of ambition and aspirations; and yet here he was settled down into the daily routine of a country doctor in a remote district, where the opportunities he had coveted for distinction were not likely to happen. No one in Besthorpe knew that he was bravely working at what seemed the readiest way of getting a competence to pay off debts which his father had left behind him, and to help one young brother to pursue his studies as a medical student, and another to finish his education at a good public school.

"Yes," he said, "I think I do understand; but there is no time to say more now, for here we are at the Turners' cottage."

Mrs. Armytage was sitting in the only available chair, with the child on her knee. His moans and cries had been piteous; but he was soothed now. On a bed in the inner room Turner himself lay, too ill to-day to lift his head or touch the heap of work which lay on a little table by his side. Kitty stood apart, biting vigorously at her apron, and a little boy of six, the one above Tommy in age, was struggling to hold the baby on his knees as he sat on a three-legged stool; while poor Mrs. Turner herself, who had been called in from her work at a neighbouring laundry, was weeping and lamenting, and scolding Kitty, and rather resenting Elsie's wise advice to her, "Not to cry and make herself ill, for Tommy would soon be better."

Mr. Grey's presence was reassuring. He had a remarkably cheerful manner when he went into the houses of the poor, and he had become their idol. Dr. Cayley, they said, had treated them just off-hand like, and never thought much was the matter that a pill or a drug would not cure. But Dr. Grey was different; he just took as much pains to find out what was wrong as if he had been attending the Princess of Wales; and never as if it was a trouble, but as if it was a pleasure.

"The treatment has been perfectly right," Mr. Grey said. "There is nothing like keeping the air from a burn or scald. Dr. Armytage has been before Dr. Grey," he said, laughing. "Poor little fellow! We must leave him just as he is till to-morrow, and then I will examine the place."

"It is only across his shoulder," Mrs. Armytage said, "and a little over one cheek. I quite hope it will be better soon, Mrs. Turner. We must be thankful it is no worse."

"Yes, and that careless, naughty girl may be glad she has not killed her little brother outright; that you may, Kitty!"

"I had 'em all to look after, and father too," sobbed Kitty. "Father wanted the broth, and the baby was screeching."

"Hold your tongue!" said a voice from the inner room, "and let me see the doctor."

Mr. Grey went in, and poor Mr. Turner said—

"The child Kitty has too much on her shoulders, sir. Agnes ought to be here. How can mother work for their bread, and mind me and the children, with only Kitty to help? I say, sir, the eldest girl should be at home. I shall never work again. Farmer Belt's coat has been lying here for mending more than a week; and look at that waistcoat, fixed for stitching, and I can't do it. If our girl had taken to that part of the business we might have pulled through a bit. But there is no help now—none."

"Everyone feels helpless, Turner, with a bad headache like yours. Cheer up, and we will do what can be done. Send one of the boys, or Kitty, to the surgery, and I'll have a draught ready for you by nine o'clock."

"Thank you kindly, sir," the poor man said, closing his weary eyes; "thank you. I don't like to be a beggar. God knows I would work if I could, and do work till I'm half dead with pain."

Mr. Grey turned away, saying to himself, "That girl's education has not taught her much, if it has not taught her her duty to her parents. I will see about that next time I am in Crayminster."

(*Continued on page* 49.)

FURS.

Although to our minds furs form so necessary and important a part of civilised winter attire, their use is by no means of very ancient date. They appear to have been introduced into Southern Europe by the Northern conquerors. There are so few animals the fur of which is suitable for purposes of dress, that the use of their skins for ornament did not suggest itself to our ancestors, and the climate precluded the idea of using them for warmth. Even after their introduction, of which we have mention as being in the sixth century, it was long before their use became common.

In the fourteenth century the use of furs must have become prevalent in England, for in 1337 Edward III. ordered that all persons should be prohibited their use unless they could spend £100 a year. The furs then used must have been furnished by traders from Italy, who procured them from the north of Asia.

Russia being the coldest of European countries, furs naturally are most worn there, and form a more prominent part in dress and fashions. In that country a man is esteemed according to the furs he wears, and it is not so much their beauty and elegance as their rarity and monetary value which make them esteemed by the Russians. Even the poorest seem to know the value of each kind. Furs have in Russia ranks and gradations of which foreigners are quite unconscious.

The first in Russian esteem is the blue fox, and of that only the part which covers the paws is reckoned of great value. Russians wear no other part, but export the whole skins, minus the paws, to France and England, where the ladies give exorbitant prices for them, and joyfully wear what in Russia would expose them to the charge of being eccentric or ridiculous. Cloaks made entirely of the paws of the blue fox are worn by the wealthy aristocracy, and are valued at from fourteen to sixteen hundred pounds sterling.

In the north-east countries of Asia is found the fiery fox, so called from the brilliant colouring of its fur, which is valued as much for its fineness as for its beautiful red colour.

Next to that of the fox, the fur of the beaver is most esteemed, and in every country fetches a high price. It is found chiefly in the north of Europe, Siberia, Kamtschatka, and North America. At the beginning of the present century two hundred thousand skins were annually exported from North America, but in consequence of silk being substituted for beaver as a covering for hats, the trade almost died out.

This cessation of demand for several years allowed the animals to increase rapidly, and the skins being required for clothing purposes, the trade has assumed even larger proportions than before. The fur consists of two kinds of hair, the longer kind comparatively coarse, smooth, and glossy, the under-coat dense, soft, and silky.

There are many species of seal, but in all the fur is very smooth, close, and abundantly lubricated with an oily secretion. There is generally an inner coating of rich fur, through which grow long hairs, forming an outer coating. Seals are found in all the colder regions of the world, whilst some come as far south as the Mediterranean, and in the Southern Hemisphere as far north as La Plata. Many ascend rivers in pursuit of fish, and are even known to wait outside salmon-nets and kill the fish when caught. Seals are also found on the coast of Wales and Scotland, and before the skins became so fashionable for jackets, muffs, and shoulder capes, they did not fetch higher prices than from four to five shillings each, whilst the Scotch skins undressed could be bought for a shilling.

The sable takes a third place in Russian favour, and is frequently employed for mantles or for the collar and cuffs of cloaks of inferior fur. The first time we find it mentioned is in an account of the skins of sables being brought from the confines of the Arctic Ocean to Rome, during the sixth century, at enormous cost to the wearers. Marco Polo mentions, as a matter of curiosity, in 1252, that he found the tents of the Cham of Tartary lined with the skins of sables and ermines, which were brought from the countries far north, "from the land of darkness." Sable was adopted as a distinctive mark of wealth and social position in England in the reign of Henry VIII., and a "statute of apparel" (24 Henry VIII.) prohibits it "being worn by any under the degree of an earl." The sable is a native of North Europe and Siberia, and is in length from eighteen to twenty inches. The best skins are procured by the Samoïeds and in Yakutsk; the darkest in colour is most highly esteemed.

The marten, erroneously called by the French "*martre zibeline*," is sometimes mistaken for the sable; the difference, however, is very apparent when the two furs are compared, the sable being dark, thick, and rough to the touch, whilst that of the marten is light yellow, and feels like silky down. The marten is found in North America, as well as in Northern Asia and the mountains of Kamtschatka. The American martens are of least value, but the fur of many is of a rich brown or olive colour. The natives of Kamtschatka, who are very fond of dress, often employ, for the costume of one of their rich men, a hundred martens' or foxes' skins.

Genett is much appreciated by travellers who cannot afford more expensive furs, on account of its warmth. Its value varies very much, and is dependent on the thickness and length of the fur. A genett cloak may cost fifty pounds or only ten; and as its value cannot be discerned at a distance, a man with a cheap cloak may pass for one very handsomely garbed.

Although in England astrakan has so long been fashionable, and if good obtains very high prices, by the Russian *beau monde* it is the least esteemed and least worn of all furs.

The lower classes of Russia use sheep-skins, bear, and elk, which, though not very handsome, are so warm that, for long journeys, the rich use them, with collars of genett, fox, or beaver.

Ermine, the royal fur of England, called by early writers "the precious ermine," is found exclusively in the cold regions of Europe and Asia. It is the winter ermines only that are highly esteemed, for in summer the fur turns a pale yellow or brown, and is reckoned valueless by a connoisseur. The fur during the winter is a pure white, except the tip of the tail, which is black; the spotted appearance of the fur is obtained by inserting these black tips at intervals into the skin. The oldest animals, which measure from fourteen to sixteen inches, yield the best fur.

Otter first came into use in the early part of the eighteenth century. It is really the skin of the sea-otter (*Enhydra lutra*), and not of the common otter (*Lutra vulgaris*). The fur of the young is a beautiful brown colour, which darkens into jet black as the animal grows older. Sea-otters are found in great numbers in the Aleutian and Kurile Islands, as well as in the Behring Islands and the neighbouring American shores.

Isabel Suart-Robson.

LITTLE MOTHERS.

In many a garden nook they sit,
  Throned in their little rocking-chairs,
Soothing their baby-dolls to sleep
  With sweet pretence of mother-cares,

Singing to some unwritten tune,
  Sweet as a bird's, their lullabies,
While hints of mother-tenderness
  Shine soft within their sunny eyes.

Dishes a fairy well might use
  On many a tiny board are spread,
While many a little hostess serves
  "The cup that cheers," the cake and bread.

What wit and wisdom one may hear,
  What airs and graces one may see,
When with their dolls upon their laps
  Two little girls are taking tea!

Alas, for us poor grown-up folks.
  Our fairy-land is far away!
Yet how its memories shine when we
  Can watch our darlings at their play!

Pausing to stroke a rosy cheek,
  Or to smooth back a tumbled curl,
We think there's nothing half so sweet
  On earth as is a little girl.

THE ART OF NURSING.

BY JOSEPHA CRANE,

Author of "Semi-detached," etc., etc.

II.—The Sick Room.

The selection of the sick room is a matter of great importance, and there are various points which should be carefully observed.

The best aspect for a sick-room is south or south-west, and a room that is large, light, and lofty should be chosen, as well as one that possesses a fire-place. In a large room there is less chance of draughts, and it is altogether the most suitable for the purpose of nursing.

There should not be any curtains about the bed, and the less drapery you have the better, woollen curtains being particularly objectionable.

With respect to light, in all brain diseases or inflammation of the eyes, it is generally excluded, and for this purpose a dark window blind is best; but in ordinary cases of illness sunlight should be allowed to enter. Do not have blinds that will not work properly, and should the patient's bed face the window—which should never be the case when it can be avoided—lessen the light when he feels that it is trying to him.

The bed should not be large, for it is easier for you to reach the patient upon a small bed, and it should be placed away from the wall on all sides. If the bed stands between the door and the fire, you must be careful to take precautions against draughts.

Feather beds are unhealthy at all times, and in illness they are most uncomfortable, as they often sink into deep hollows. The best bedding is a good horse-hair mattress, about six inches thick, with a palliasse underneath, or a spring bed. Light blankets or ventilated eider-down quilts are the best coverings, and the old-fashioned cotton counterpanes should never be used at any time. These latter are most objectionable, having no ventilation and being very heavy. Sometimes it is necessary to place a mackintosh between the mattress and the under sheet or blanket. A strap fastened to the end of the bedstead is a good thing, as by it the patient can raise himself in bed.

Any obstruction, such as a blower or fire-board, should be removed from the fire-place, and the register should always be open, even if there is no fire.

A fire should never be allowed to get very low, as then there is the fuss of making it up again. Often sick people are put to a great deal of needless discomfort with regard to the fire and the method of keeping it up. During the day, unless the patient is very nervous or suffering from some acute disease, the ordinary means of putting coals on with a shovel may be used, but to have knobs of coal in the coal-scuttle and to put them on with a small pair of tongs is much better. A pair of thick housemaid's gloves kept close to the fire-place can be used, the coals then being placed with the fingers on the fire, and yet the hands not be soiled.

To keep up a fire at night, I have found it best to make up a coal-scuttle of small packets of coal done up in thin paper. These can be taken up without gloves, and cause no sound when put on the fire. Do not use a poker; a small piece of common firewood answers the purpose better, as it makes less noise. Sometimes a patient cannot bear to hear even the slight sound of cinders dropping on the hearth. This noise can be avoided by laying a little very dry sand or earth under the grate. By this means, too, the ashes and cinders can be cleared away with much less of the noise that is little less than torture to some people.

The air is often very bad in a cold room, and very pure in a hot one. The chimney is an excellent ventilator, for as the current of warm air constantly ascends the chimney, a fresh supply of air is being as constantly drawn in to supply its place.

The temperature of a sick room should be regulated by the nature of the patient's disease and his own tastes, but in ordinary cases 60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit is the ordinary average. A thermometer is inexpensive, and one should always be in the room, placed in a central part, and not, needless to say, close to fire or window.

It is often more difficult to ventilate a sick room in a private house than a hospital ward, but still the difficulties can be overcome, the room kept sweet and airy, and yet no draughts allowed to reach the patient.

Pure air, be it ever remembered, must come from outside, and opening the door rarely answers the purpose.

Fresh air is absolutely necessary for every living being, and how best to procure it is what we have to think about. Air becomes bad from being continually breathed, for at every expiration we give out air that is unfit to be breathed again. Dr. Parkes has defined proper ventilation to be "clean air displacing foul air constantly and steadily, without chilling the patient."

There are two ways of ventilating a room.

One is by leaving the window farthest from the patient an inch open at the top, or else adopting the substitute first recommended by Mr. Hinckes Bird, called "costless ventilation." This is to have a piece of wood four inches thick, and of the same length and breadth as the window sash frame. The lower sash should be raised so that the piece of wood may fit into the space left. A current of air will thus be admitted between the upper and lower sashes, and this at such a height from the floor that no draught will be caused.

The next method is to cover the patient well with bedclothes, wrapping an extra hood or shawl well round the head and up to the mouth, and then opening the windows wide, top and bottom, and the doors as well. This, of course, could not be done in case of an infectious disease. Doors and windows can be left open five or ten minutes, but leave the patient covered up after you have closed them until the room returns to its proper temperature.

Do not keep damp towels in the sick room, as the damp is drawn into the air which the patient breathes, and for this reason nothing should be aired at the sick-room fire.

The room should be kept in a state of perfect cleanliness, and for obvious reasons it is best to have very little carpet, and that only which can be taken up often. Let the carpets be shaken, beaten, and then returned to their places, minus the dust and accumulations of dirt which the most thorough sweeping never entirely removes. There should be enough carpet to prevent noise and keep the room warm, but a nailed-down carpet serves only to retain effluvia, dust, and dirt, which shaking in pure air removes most effectually. All rooms are better if the boards are stained and varnished. Besides the fact that they are very unsightly if left unstained, the flooring, unless filled up and polished, retains all

dirt and organic matter, and is a rival in the way of evils to the carpet.

Sometimes sick folk dislike having the room cleaned, but this is a matter which the nurse can manage if she uses her common sense about it, and chooses her time well. It is never advisable to do any dusting or cleaning when the patient is taking his food; and to put a screen round the bed when cleaning is being done is a good plan.

A carpet may be easily cleaned by passing a damp cloth quickly over it. This should be done under the bed as well as in other parts of the room.

A screen can be very readily extemporised out of a clothes-horse, covered with a shawl or piece of drapery of any kind, and paper screens can be bought at a very small cost. There should always be a table close to the patient's bed, and one that has a drawer and can be easily moved is the best.

Plants should not be left in a room during the night, as they give out carbonic gas. During the day-time they can be placed in the sick room with advantage, as they take in carbonic acid and give out oxygen.

The paper of a sick room is of importance, and those papers which can be washed are the best. If, however, you are obliged to use a room which has an ugly patterned paper on it, you can mitigate the evil by hanging up some pretty pictures. To leave a patient day after day before a blank wall, with only a paper upon it, possibly with a pattern that he can count, is cruel.

A sick room should always be kept in the most perfect order, and the old maxim acted upon of, "a place for everything and everything in its place."

Do not leave medicine-bottles within sight of the patient, but keep them, if possible, out of the sick room. Never wash glasses, spoons, etc., there, and keep all food, as well as medicines, out of the room. If a prescription has been changed, put the former bottles of medicine quite away, to avoid any chance of mistake.

The burning of pastiles or scented paper, be it remembered, only covers unpleasant odours, and neither takes them away nor purifies the air. Place some Condy's fluid in water about the room, and keep a little in all vessels that are in use.

Before the doctor comes, have everything quite prepared for him. You will have the paper I have named before ready to hand, and on it written any notes to help your memory regarding what you have to say about the patient. Keep an inkstand in the room, a good pen, and some paper on which the doctor may write his prescription.

You should have clean towels close at hand, and, if it is a surgical case, porringers to hold soiled dressings, lard, bandages, olive oil, strapping, and lint—all, in short, that you think the doctor is likely to require. In case of an operation different things are required, and it is well to remember that if an anæsthetic is to be administered, no food should be given to the patient for four hours previously, and the nurse should be prepared for sickness, which often happens.

Ask the doctor what he will need, and have it ready, but in any case, hot and cold water sponges, waterproof sheeting, towels, ice, and carbolic oil should be easy to get at. These things should not be paraded in view of the patient or discussed with him. It is far better to let him know as little about them as possible, being careful, at the same time, to avoid an air of mystery.

Many people have a very great dread of operations, and it is quite needless to talk about what you have to do and so add to their inevitable sufferings.

In every home there should be a medicine-cupboard, where in emergency what is required can be found. In it should be kept Condy's fluid, or some other disinfectant, lint, rag, oiled silk, carron oil (equal parts lime juice and olive oil), mustard flour in a tin, linseed meal (also kept in a tin), zinc powder, Rigollot's mustard leaves, flannel for compresses, a spatula for making poultices, an enema, an india-rubber hot-water bottle, a feeding-cup, cotton wool, etc. Thermometers are useful things to have. Besides the one named as desirable to have in the sick room, there are two other kinds. One is a clinical thermometer, for testing the heat of a person's body—and the best are those which have a self-registering index—and a bath thermometer. The latter is of use in testing the degree required, as when plunged into the water the mercury rises and the bath can be heated or cooled to the exact degree ordered.

SEVEN DAYS OLD.

Oh, little wonder—guest without a name!
Oh, breathing blossom that we trembling claim!
White soul that dost attune a hymn untold—
How shall we name thee, sweet—one Sabbath old!

Say, do the flow'rets, smiling, whisp'ring low,
Tell Baby's name the while their beauties blow?
Shall she be Rosamund, the queen of flowers,
Shall she be Lilias, this dove of ours?

Daisy or Violet, or Pansy fair—
Which shall she be, our bonnie rosebud rare!
Stella and Margery low breathèd are—
Which wilt thou be, oh, Baby! *pearl* or *star*?

One softly turneth to the Bible-page,
Choosing the names that live from age to age,
Sarah, the princess, Naomi, the fair,
Ruth, friendly-hearted, Hannah, grace and prayer.

Then do our thoughts in silence backward wing
Unto the love that Paradise will bring,
And for a mother's sake—thrice holy claim—
Our hearts repeat sweet Mary's tender name.

Oh, little child, we scarcely can decide
How we shall call thee, babe, the wondering-eyed!
Take thou thy rest, half smiling at our cares,
Oh, soul unnamèd, yet enwreath'd with prayers!

One lives, our darling, who thy name doth know,
One clasps thee close who ne'er will let thee go—
Oh, 'mid Thy saints, Thy kingdom who proclaim,
Shepherd eternal! write our white lamb's name!

M. S. Haycraft.

DOLLY'S GUARDIAN.

BY JENNIE PERRETT.

"My trouble is greater than I can bear, Aunt Esther."

Miss Raymond looked up from the letter she was writing; then, putting down her pen, she crossed the room and knelt down by the couch upon which her niece was lying.

"My poor child," she whispered.

Her eyes were dim with tears, but the dark-blue eyes raised to her loving, gentle face, were dry and tearless.

"If she would only cry," Miss Raymond said to herself, "but I have never known her shed a single tear all through this trouble."

This was true. Aline Raymond had heard with apparent composure the physician's plainly expressed opinion that her lover must leave England without any delay, on account of the delicate state of his health. She had assisted in the hurried preparations for his departure to New Zealand; she had accompanied him to the port from whence he sailed, and had watched, as long as she could, the vessel that was carrying her loved one away from her. Then, still outwardly calm, she had returned home with her aunt. For the next two days she tried to live her usual life, tried to be kind and attentive as ever to the wishes of her fondly-loved relative. Then came the reaction from the severe strain she had imposed upon herself, and with a heart well-nigh breaking, she exclaimed—

"My trouble is greater than I can bear."

"My darling, you have been very brave," whispered Miss Raymond.

"Do you think so?" said Aline, with a tired smile. "I have tried to do the best I could, for Charlie's sake. I knew that if I gave way and broke down, it would be terrible for him."

"But if you have a good cry now, dear, I promise you I won't write and tell him," said Miss Raymond, as she pressed her gentle fingers on the girl's burning, aching brow.

"Oh! that is so good, auntie—your cool hands I mean—but I'm not going to cry; I can't now. My grief must find some other outlet. What was that we were talking about one day, just before this trouble came? You remember, don't you, about putting your own sorrows as far as possible on one side, in order to share and bear those of others? Now, whose sorrows shall I bear, auntie? It seems to me that all my friends are in prosperous circumstances just now."

Miss Raymond turned aside to hide the tears that, in spite of all her efforts to restrain them, would persist in falling as she listened to the girl's brave words.

"Several times I have purposed telling you that Mary Marsh has lost her little Edith," she said, as soon as she could trust herself to speak.

"Lost Edith," repeated Aline; "oh! when, auntie? Why I saw the child only the day before—before we went away with Charlie!"

"She died yesterday, love—it was very sudden—croup, and Mary feels like you do, that her trouble is almost more than she can bear. Poor Mary, the best of servants when with us, and a devoted wife and mother in her own little home. Then there is more sorrow, not in our village, but at Axlewood, five miles away. That nice young widow, Mrs. Elton, who has done so much needlework for you, died two days ago."

"The day Charlie sailed?"

"Yes, and her dear little girl, Dolly—you remember her, Aline?—is left without any relative, so far as is known, to take care of her. The workhouse is talked of as——"

"No, no," exclaimed Aline, "poor little Dolly must not go to the workhouse. Auntie—you are so wise and clever and know how to arrange everything—can you not see the proper authorities, whoever they may be, the parish officials, and say that I will take care of Dolly, I will be her guardian?"

"You, dear?"

"Yes, I; don't I look old or staid enough? Ah! don't you see what I want to do? No little Dolly, however sweet and dear, can ever take little Edith's place in Mary's heart, but if I go to Mary and plead Dolly's desolate condition, she will not refuse to care for her; there can be only the difference of a few months in the ages of the two children, Dolly is two years old and Edith must have been quite eighteen months. Now, auntie, what do you think of my plan?"

"It is a kind and generous one, like all your plans, my child," said Miss Raymond, as she kissed the girl's sweet face.

Prompt in all her actions, Aline lost no time in making her request known to the bereaved young mother, and very kind was the response to her appeal.

"Will I take the little orphan and bring her up for you, do you say, Miss Aline?" said Mary Marsh. "Yes, willingly, only—only I want no payment. If the child learns to love me, that will be payment enough."

"But then I want to be her guardian," pleaded Aline, "so you must please let me pay all the expenses. Aunt Esther will make all the business arrangements with you, she will settle what is to be paid to you weekly or monthly for Dolly's board and clothes. Then there will be more money forthcoming when the school-days begin, and more to apprentice her to some business, if she shows a taste for any. Oh! I must do it all properly, Mary. You don't know what an important person I shall feel when I know I am really and truly Dolly's guardian."

"The child's guardian-angel I should say," said John Marsh, when his wife told him of Aline's request. "God bless her and bring her lover back to her safe and sound, say I. Gladly we'll take the little one. As you say, we'd take her without thought of any payment for the sake of little Edith."

So into the cottage so lately visited by the angel of Death, little blue-eyed Dolly entered, and there found all she needed—the tenderest love and care. And as she ministered to the child's wants, peace, hope, and comfort entered Mary's sad heart. As Aline had truly said, "No other child, however dear, could take little Edith's place"; still, as the days passed on, Dolly grew more and more precious, and no one unacquainted with her history would, if they had seen her in her home, have imagined her to be an adopted child; she seemed, as John Marsh often said, "quite their own."

And Dolly's guardian, the brave, true-hearted girl who put her own sorrows aside to minister to the needs of others, how fared it with her?

In blessing others she herself was blessed. Many a happy hour she spent in Mary Marsh's cottage, nursing and playing with her little ward.

After a year's absence from England, Aline's lover, having

"Dolly had just come out of the garden." p. 42.

gained health and strength in a more genial climate, announced his intention of returning home to claim his bride.

"No," said Aline firmly, as she read the letter, "No, Mr. Charlie, that will not do; it will be better for you to remain away a year or two longer; but, auntie, do you think I might——would you spare me to go to him?"

"I will go with you, dear," said Miss Raymond. "I think

a thorough change for a year or two would do me good, and I can easily arrange for Miss Ellesford and Janet to come and stay here."

"Oh! auntie, that is too good of you," exclaimed Aline, "I could not bear the thought of leaving you—you who have been father and mother to me for so many years, and yet you always said you should give me up to Charlie——"

"So I shall, dear; but that will be when Charlie is really able to come home again. You foolish child, do you imagine I don't know how your kind heart would often be troubled about your old aunt if she were so far away from you? We will go together, dear."

So it was settled. Together they departed and together, accompanied by Aline's husband, they returned two years later.

One of the first visits Aline paid after her return was to Mary Marsh's cottage. Dolly, now a fine strong child, had just come out of the garden. She was somewhat shy, and not very communicative at first, but Mary, with her own bonny baby in her arms, had plenty to say to Dolly's guardian.

"She's just a comfort in the house," ma'am, said the good woman; "I don't know what we should do without our little Dolly. You say it was a good day for her when you brought her here. Ah! it was a good day for us, too. Caring for her has lightened our trouble as nothing else could have done."

WOMAN AS BREAD-WINNER.

BY E. C. SUTTON.

It is a great mistake to think that honest work can ever shame a woman. But she will do well to consider deeply before embarking on the ocean of competition. If called upon to earn a livelihood for herself, and perhaps for others, she cannot be too careful in this matter of choice. Her duty plainly is to do the best she can for herself, and to draw mainly upon those talents of which she is possessed, that she knows to be her strong points. Having once decided upon the occupation which is to bring her bread, she must resolutely determine that it *shall* do so; as it most surely *will* if her employers see that she is competent and "means business."

The employment-market is besieged by pretenders, offering to do work cheaply, and so for awhile they push their way into a place. But the sham is soon discovered. Their unpunctuality, negligent and inefficient services soon disgust the employer, and he is but too thankful to pay higher wages to the servant who demands them, in return for what he acknowledges to be deserving work.

Depend upon it, the woman who proves herself capable of doing what she undertakes to do, who is trustworthy, conscientious, and true to herself, is bound to meet with appreciation and to command a situation worthy of her. It rests with herself to choose a post; but on no account must she underrate the value of a gracious, pleasant manner and voice, or ever forget that in the most despised of avocations her example and sympathy carry with them influences upon those around her for which she is responsible to God. With conscious rectitude of purpose and self-respect any woman may start bravely for the world of business, to earn by toil of hand or brain, according to her natural gifts, the wherewithal to live.

Poverty is no disgrace, unless it be brought upon ourselves by improvidence or neglect of opportunities. But even so, there is no fitter expurgation of our folly, or remedy for the consequences of it, than courageous, diligent work. Neither does it unsex a woman when she is compelled to seek a livelihood outside the walls of home. Into the wide world of commerce she may carry the torch of a cheerful vitality and courageous perseverance which will illumine the path of many a brother working side by side with her, without losing one iota of her femininity; and in her subtle refinement and delicacy of feeling his own better instincts will be kept alive; he will see sweet flowers by the road-side of toil, which he had till now believed to be only strewn with burs.

But now to the practical question of what women may do to help themselves.

The Civil Service, in 1881, opened up to them a vast field of employment in the Post Office and its various departments of the savings bank, telegraphy, etc. So greatly has woman's work been appreciated by Government, that her services are ever in increasing demand. The staff of women-clerks is yearly enlarged, and more still are asked for in the savings bank department, now moving into their new and extensive premises. The number of candidates, however, presenting themselves at all the frequent competitive Civil Service examinations is enormous. These are very severe, and rightly so, in order to secure the necessary competency and thorough acquaintance with the subjects bearing upon the work. All information as to times of examination, subjects to be mastered, and rates of payment for Government appointments can be had by application to the Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Cannon Row, Westminster, London, S.W.

As a clever shorthand writer—say 150 words a minute—a woman may command a really excellent salary, either in a house of business or as secretary to a society, a literary man or woman, solicitor or doctor, whom pressure of work compels to seek an aid to be safely relied upon for discretionary silence as to the employer's affairs, good spelling, educational acquirements, and general thoroughness, combined, of course, with agreeable habits and manners. The more versed in speaking and writing languages a shorthand writer is—and especially if her accomplishments include rapid execution on the type-writer—the better will she be paid. Any woman intent upon winning bread in the sphere of labour, and a margin for comfort into the bargain, should watch the advertisement columns of the daily papers, and at once respond. One day's delay may forfeit her chances of success.

But as ordinary office-clerks in the commercial line thousands of women find a livelihood. As book-keeping and copying clerks they occupy the high stool of office in well-warmed, comfortable rooms in most of the huge establishments of our City merchants and railway companies, etc. Their powers of physical endurance, when their heart is in their work, are said to equal those of men; while in the all-important qualities of habitual reliability, punctuality, steadiness, quietness, plodding, perseverance, and general accuracy they are their acknowledged superiors—at least, so

the writer has been assured by an ingenuous masculine employer of lady clerks; and with so much in favour of female services in this direction, she cannot but lament the fact that they meet with less remunerative return. In financial matters, generally, man's genius has the superiority; his intellectual grasp has been toughened by his rougher and sterner education, seasoned by a long past; but the difference of brain-power between the sexes promises to be soon reduced to a minimum, now that all intellectual advantages are opened up equally to them both.

Struggling women of intellectual attainments—and many, alas, hampered with the burden of a family to rear and support—find in literature a maintenance more or less scanty and uncertain. Some write books and contribute pay-earning articles to magazines, chit-chat letters on social subjects to newspaper columns; some of our editors, and more of our sub-editors, are women; and many others occupy posts as readers in the offices of newspapers and journals, as their critics in matters of art, music, and the drama; while a yet greater number employ themselves in the mechanical service of the press-cutting and information agencies. As readers and amanuenses to blind employers and invalids, women often secure an interest in life as well as a comfortable home; and frequently the chaperoning of young ladies in their walks and to social entertainments brings grist to the mill of the bread-winner.

Teaching has attractions for many of the fair sisterhood; but only those who are thoroughly up to the modern standard of excellence in every branch can have much chance of success, either at home, on the Continent, or even (with rare exceptions) in our colonies. A certificate of competency is indispensable, but with this the holder has a fair field of success before her, though the labour and tax upon her vital energies are peculiarly severe.

In the realm of medicine, gradations of useful and profitable employment are open to our sex, involving, however, more or less expensive training and preliminary expenditure of time. Yet as a doctor—and women-physicians and dentists are greatly in request in the Eastern world—the *diplomée* finds her outlay abundantly repaid. Some may smile at the woman-dentist, and doubt her capabilities to extract a tooth; but it is a fact that in the ranks of these are to be found ladies of what is called "birth," inspired by the longing to relieve physical torture among the zenanas, who have taken up the study of dentistry, and whose anatomical knowledge and knack of wrist render them in every sense the successful rivals of the masculine operator with his "iron grip that won't let go." The scientific *masseuse* is coming daily more into fashion; but she should be robust in health physically and mentally, tall, and of cheerful, agreeable, and patient disposition. Again, as hospital and private sick-nurses, capable women are always in demand, a proper training being, of course, an indispensable qualification. Every information on this sphere of bread-winning may be obtained by communicating with the Secretary, 8, Oxford Circus Avenue, Oxford Street, London, W.

Women can turn their artistic talents to account in a great variety of ways, it being always understood that their work be of the highest order. Portrait-painting, photograph-tinting, picture-card painting, designing for fashion-plates and house decoration, needlework and embroidery, even dressmaking and millinery, all may be classed under the head of remunerative art; while, in the humbler spheres of bread-winning, trade and business in almost every department are open to women, and behind the linendrapers' and other counters, besides those of the bread and refreshment companies in the metropolis and provinces, ladies stand. We have lady couriers, lady hair-dressers, pianoforte-tuners, as well as lady reciters and musical entertainers at evening parties, to say nothing of the countless minor opportunities seized upon in the struggle for existence by women of lower degrees of culture and taste.

All women engaged in honest and legitimate bread-winning are worthy of honour, if the work they undertake can first be consecrated by prayer for God's blessing, and is done in a cheerful and contented spirit, graced by that sympathy for fellow-workers, which always goes so far to lighten a sister's burden. But whatever line of work you take in hand, dear toilers at the mill-wheel, remember this: BE THOROUGH!

EMILY PFEIFFER.

THE general public knows Mrs. Pfeiffer best as a writer of poetry of a very delicate and elevating kind; but she is also, and has for many years been warmly on the side of the workers, and has not only written largely on subjects connected with the improvement of the people and the elevation of women, but is about to give the very best practical testimony to the sincerity of her aspirations in these respects. She will early in the present year open a cottage orphanage, which will be entirely under her own direction and on her own property—an institution which will be of an experimental kind, in so far as it will determine in no slight measure the character and scope of yet larger institutions to follow in due time. The development which these institutions will take will embody the result of much thought, and will, in fact, be the fruit of a lifetime's effort and conviction—nay, of the effort and conviction of two lifetimes; hers and her deceased husband's—and as the literary life has in her case been all along so intimately bound up with the convictions which have found this issue, she may, perhaps, be fitly quoted as illustrating the words of Mrs. Browning:

> "That we may do
> Our Father's business in these temples mirk,
> While thus apart from toil, our souls pursue
> Some high, calm, spheric tune, and prove our work
> The better for the sweetness of our song."

The lines in a certain way are the more apt to our purpose in that Mrs. Pfeiffer has, during many years, lived the life of an invalid, and in her early days underwent very trying experiences, alike from her delicate constitution, both of body and of mind, and from the circumstances in which she was placed.

Her father was a man of considerable property, and was an officer in the army. Her mother was the youngest child of a once numerous family, by far the greater number of

whom had died prior to her birth (two of the sons of wounds received in battle and one by accident). Her maternal grandfather, Mr. Tilsley, of Milford Hall, in Montgomeryshire, had unfortunately given the weight of his name to a county bank of which his only remaining son was the head; and when this bank failed, he held himself in honour, though not in law, answerable for its liabilities to the whole extent of his fortune. "My mother," Mrs. Pfeiffer writes, "was proudly recounting to our father on a return from a visit to her father, the glad assent which she and her sisters had yielded to this determination, when suddenly the three young children, supposed to be occupied at the table, unable to contain themselves for joy and pride, lifted up their voices and wept aloud. The impression of such a moment is ineffaceable. From this time the family history on my mother's side, all its members being in some way or other involved in the bank, became one of increasing poverty; my father, who had already sold out of the army, having even to sell a portion of his inherited property to pay back, at the claim of the bank, the allowances and gifts made to my mother since her marriage."

The family then went to reside on the estate at Lewkner, in Oxfordshire, where her father's position as a large-hearted country squire must often have been very painful in his inability to do for people what he would. His little daughter Emily, at a very early age, began to realise what the struggles and pinchings meant; and the circumstances in which she was placed opened the door to an invading flood of sensibility unfitted to her childish years. The wearisome and hopeless monotony of the lives lived in the peasant homes which she frequently visited, pressed upon her with an unspeakable weight, and the vision of a future existence—the only compensation for so much toil and suffering and sorrow—was not calculated to make things better to a mind thirsting for beauty and joy. She became subject to fits of depression and melancholy, which she tried to hide from others. Even in very early years she was sensitive and apt to brood. In a cottage garden in Sussex, near to a house which her parents were visiting, when she was about five years of age, she first realised the idea of death by receiving an apple from the hand of an old woman wrinkled and toothless—a human ruin, such as she had never seen before, and the impression then made upon her imagination remained, and afterwards became the subject of one of her poems entitled "A Lost Eden," sufficiently indicating the oversensitive and premature nature of her mind. These are the closing lines of this poem, which take on new hues of colour, and deeper suggestion when read with the knowledge of the touching early incident, so long and clearly remembered, out of which they arose:—

"Yea, verily unto the five-years' child
After the midnight anguish, came the first
Throb of that vital love, that undefiled,
Which lights or leads us darkly thro' the worst
Beguilements of a wilderness accurst;
Not that which sucks at life and still cries 'give,'
But love whereby the worlds and all things live.
That which our being feels alone to be:
My mother's love that was alive in me
Drew me that day a step towards the sun
Wherein our lonely lives arise as one.
So was I lifted from my first despair
Out of the fleeting shadow of her hair,
And from a passing glimpse of love's own peace
Given I knew that it has power to bless
All sorrow, and to flood the wilderness.
God give our fainting hearts His sweet release!"

Of regular education for the growing minds of the children there was none; but Mrs. Pfeiffer is disposed to think that the struggle kept up then and always by her parents to maintain a position was fruitful in better consequences than mere schooling would have been without it. Only in her own case, as would inevitably happen with a child like her, too much time and scope were allowed for brooding over the woes of others and the evils of life in many forms. As she grew older she endeavoured to find relief and escape from her own thoughts in books. She read whatever came in her way, and dates a new awakening to the sense of wonder and beauty in nature from a first sight of the sea, and to the significance of human life and language by the reading of a work on the Round Towers of Ireland. It is indeed marvellous what the young plastic mind will find sustenance and solace in.

"The sea," she says, "which I first saw at Towen, in Wales, exists as a lasting picture in my mind to the present hour. All I remember of the town is a little row of gaily-painted houses on the low coast, in one of which we lived; but the great calm blue sea, with its white fringe of waves (it was spring and summer when we were there, and had been conscious of snow for the first time that year as we went thither), with its golden sands, to which my small stature brought me so near; its vividly-tinted seaweeds, and above all, the delicate, the enchanting little shells which dimpled the sands at the receding tide, had a magic in them, a freshness, and a strangeness unutterable. The beautiful word 'cornelian,' which I took to be a stone more precious than rubies, and for which the grown-up persons about me were constantly seeking, added a preciousness and oft-recurring music to the poetry of the whole."

She began to try to express herself; and no doubt with some sense of glad satisfaction, found that her thoughts naturally sought to express themselves in verse. She now began to long to test her capabilities by pitting them against those of others.

By and by—and a lucky circumstance it no doubt was—she was taken by a kind friend who felt a warm interest in her on a tour abroad. She saw the Rhine, with its ancient castles perched high on their rocks, its lovely scenery, its historic old towns, each with its legend, and designates that journey a turning point in her life. Afterwards she spent a season in London, and drew from its gaiety, variety, and life the delight and aid and suggestion such a mind was likely to feel. Not long after that she married; and in this new existence she found leisure and abundant stimulus to write, and wrote a great deal; but the lack of systematic education was keenly realised, and she now felt more than before that there was much to master as well as much to unlearn. She drew out a plan of more methodical study and work; but this was frustrated through such utter and long-continued physical prostration that for some years she was unable even to write her own letters. The sense of wasted powers that she had planned to cultivate became a heavy drawback on her happiness. The experiences of this time she has indicated in her sonnet titled "Beating the Air," which, as it has biographical value we may be allowed to quote:—

"Song drew the curtains of my life aside,
But left me songless ere the risen day,
When hurried heart-beats took my breath away,
And overdone with life I almost died.
Then it was laid upon me to abide
What time my thought was searched with sharp alloy,
What, while my will in fiery durance lay,—
All coinage of their store as yet denied.

So held in silent depths my grieved soul
Would listen to the crowned ones harping high,
And yearn to touch such gentle hearts with dole;
When at the last a kindling breath, a cry,
Unsealed my lips as if with burning coal;
Alas! the crowned ones heard me, and passed by."

In spite of all the drawbacks progress was made, and in 1873 "Gerard's Monument" was published, and with it her literary career may be said to have begun. From that time at intervals volumes of poetry have appeared, and articles on "Woman's Work" and related themes in the "Contemporary Review" and elsewhere; all having the same merits, marked by deep thought, earnestness, and felicity of expression.

In spite of the ill-health from which Mrs. Pfeiffer suffered, her married life was one of delightful harmony and happiness. Her husband believed in her powers, and was wise in his suggestions and encouragements. She has thus exercised her art under peculiar difficulty, living always on the brink of insomnia, or sleeplessness, which is only kept at bay by change of occupation, the most fascinating and effectual being painting, especially the painting of flowers. "On the other hand," she adds, "no worker that I have ever known has had such help where it was possible that help could be given, my husband taking upon himself all the burdens of which he could relieve me, and accepting this trial as though it had been the fulfilment of his highest hope. But for his care and devotion I should have died."

Mrs. Pfeiffer has informed us that she regards it as a duty to the memory of her husband to do all that in her lies to cultivate still further the literary gift in which he so firmly believed; and she has the hope that, in part, it may yet be given her to do so. But this, she adds, is not the only work that has been left to her to carry out for his sake. He was a firm believer in the influence for good that women were destined to exercise on the future of society; and after the satisfaction of all legitimate claims, the fortune made by him in this country is to go, by his wish, to an object calculated to develop and to train, in chosen individuals, this factor of human progress. The small orphanage in which she is about to experiment on these lives is already built since he left her, last January, and she hopes that before these lines appear, it will be opened. In a letter to us, just received, Mrs. Pfeiffer says—

"My part in it is solely to carry out my husband's inmost desires and convictions, committed to my care, as all else that was his, without any legal restraints. We were both impressed by the readiness with which numbers of the uneducated classes, brought up in the dovecotes of religious dogma, throw off all spiritual support, and with it, too often, all moral restraint, upon the first glimmer of historical or scientific fact and difficulty. We believed that an education on a somewhat broader basis might help some *carefully chosen* individuals to meet the stress of the crude light of partial knowledge which is daily increasing, and enable them, perhaps, a little to irradiate the sphere to which they might be found fitting.

"It is in this view that I have built the first cottage home of the orphanage my husband's bequest will go at my death to establish and endow. The children will go to church, and join daily in simple prayers and hymns, but will not be called upon to give in categorical adherence to any elaborate creed. It is an experiment brought down to the poorer classes, and one which will require careful watching. But I am on the spot, the cottage is on our own ground, and I have nothing so good to do with my life as to employ it in carrying forward the ends which gave dignity to the labour of his."

ALEX. H. JAPP.

[Alas! since the above article was stereotyped, Mrs. Pfeiffer has passed away. As we have said, she was till lately hopeful of recovery, and was full of projects of usefulness alike in literature and in benevolent work. All that is now at an end; her friends will mourn for a sympathetic and considerate companion, who bore much suffering with heroic patience and hopefulness.]

WHAT SHALL WE DRINK?

THE question of drink has been partly discussed in the former papers on food,* and it has been already said that a liberal diet of fruit will prevent thirst.

It is most important to understand this. Many a drunkard who has signed the pledge has had hard work to keep it, and has ended in going back to the old slavery. Think what it must be to drop to cold water from exciting potions of beer or brandy, to be assailed continually by strong temptation, and to feel all the weakness of reaction that follows over-stimulation. Temperance reformers have made a great mistake in being too negative in their advice. "Don't touch alcohol" is not enough. The poor creature who longs to be saved from his old craving must have something new, something definite, presented to him in place of the beloved alcohol. Dr. Chalmers has told us of "the expulsive power of a new affection;" and we all know what happened to the place that was "*empty* and swept and garnished."

What the thirsty one wants is something that is easily obtained, easily taken; for busy or tired men and women cannot always stay to prepare soup or cocoa, and if the glass of "something else" be at hand, what wonder if that be taken in preference? Now fruit is exactly what is wanted here. It is better raw than cooked; it is easily kept within reach, in the pocket or anywhere else, and it is growing cheaper every day. It has been said by one who knows, that an orange taken before breakfast will save the eater from thirst throughout the day. And, as oranges are cheaper and more plentiful now than they have ever been before, is there anything to hinder anyone and everyone from having his fill? And for the rest of the year, when oranges are not in season, are there not gooseberries, strawberries, currants, and apples, one after the other, till oranges come again?

Fruit is always with us, home-grown and foreign, and there is no excuse for those who never taste it. The cost of it is certainly not an excuse, for we all know many a man who has his twopenny worth of beer or his threepenny worth of whiskey more than once in the day. I heard not long ago of a man who spends threepence every morning on whiskey. And this is only what he calls his "morning." More than one threepence follows the first before the day is done. This very man would probably consider fruit of any kind to be a luxury beyond his reach, and his wife would never dream of providing it even once a day for the little ones.

I felt glad the other day when I saw a working-man come into a shop for two big apples. It is not often one sees a sight of that kind. Small as it is, it is a sign of the times. Alcohol is going out and fruit is coming in. People all over the land are beginning to ask for more fruit, and not only for more fruit, but for more home-grown fruit; and other people are being stirred up to provide it for them. And, some day, we hope, men will be wise enough to renounce both flesh and alcohol (two thirst-producers), and find their sustenance in "the kindly fruits of the earth."

It may seem at first sight absurd to give fruit as an answer to the question, What shall we drink? Fruit is more than drink; nevertheless it may be reckoned as drink because it is largely made up of water. In every pound of fruit there are twelve or fourteen ounces of water. Here we have a supply ready to keep up the right proportion of water in the human frame. Mr. Gladstone told us a year ago that about three-fourths of every man, woman, and child consist of nothing but water. No wonder that all that is left of each body at the last is "two handfuls of white dust." The remainder has resolved itself into gases and has vanished.

No one in health drinks, or ought to drink, more than two or three pints daily of any liquid. And yet 120 pounds out of 172 in a man as tall as Mr. Gladstone are only water, and need constant replenishing.

In a fever the great heat dries up the water in the blood, and the blood becomes thick. Then begins the constant cry for something to drink. The liquid given to the poor sufferer soon grows as hot as the blood, turns into steam, opens the pores of the skin, and carries off some of the heat in perspiration; and there is at once relief. A man who is drunk, says Dr. Edward Smith, does not perspire at all. The alcohol he has taken shuts up the pores, dries up the moisture in the blood, and thus makes him frantic. We see, then, how needful it is to supply these bodies of ours with liquid of some kind. We are told that we might live for a week or two without food if we had plenty of water, but that we should die in two or three days if we had dry food and no water.

So many people imagine that thirst is only an affair of the palate that I am tempted to give a little illustration in order to help them to understand that when the blood contains sufficient water the palate feels no pain. What is a shipwrecked sailor to do with

> "Water, water everywhere,
> But not a drop to drink"?

Clinging to a barren rock, or tossed in an open boat, he may be able to hold out till help comes if he can but conquer the thirst-enemy. Let him soak himself, then, in the sea-water and he will suffer no thirst. Millions of pores all over the skin will carry the moisture into the sweat-glands, and the sweat-glands will let it run into the capillaries, and the capillaries into the larger channels of the blood. The pores are so very small that every particle of salt is left outside.

The mothers, whose *Companion* this is, are chiefly concerned, however, with the question of drink for their children. To them I would say, If you want your boys and girls to grow up with no craving for beer, wine, and spirits, give them plenty of fruit in these early days. We are dealing just now with fruit simply in its thirst-destroying capacity. If the little ones were well supplied with fruit at breakfast, dinner, and tea-time, we should not so often hear the cry between meals of "Please, I want a drink!" To the question, How much fruit ought they to have? I would answer, As much as they can take while at table, and none at any other time.

The following is a case in point. A woman who was for years so dependent upon her cup of tea as to be in danger of becoming a slave to it, some months ago gave up eating meat. One consequence of this was that she began to eat more fruit. She had fruit, stewed or fresh, at almost every meal. All this time she never thought about her tea-drinking, until one day she was surprised to find that tea was no longer a necessity. She takes it still, but in moderation, and often has no fancy for it whatever. Its spell is broken. In the case of one who has been a habitual drinker of alcohol, the change would be still more marked. The spirit which has dried up the moisture in the blood, burnt up the tissues, and destroyed the albumen, or glue, is no

* MOTHERS' COMPANION, February, March, October and November, 1889.

longer supplied to the system; and instead thereof plentiful juice of many kinds comes in to cool, to moisten, and to thin the blood, and the fearful longing for drink dies gradually away.

The question of milk is a much-debated one. Some people shrink from milk with as much disgust as from butcher's meat; and most of us can remember cases of typhoid fever which were directly traceable to it. We do not as a rule see the cows that supply us with what, after all, was intended by nature for their own young ones; and we do not know the conditions of their lives. We picture them out in green fields, free to pick and choose their food, and surrounded by the air and sunshine of heaven. But there are thousands of wretched animals shut up in close, dirty stables, eating only what is brought to them, often insufficiently supplied with water, knee-deep in filth, breathing the ammonia that rises from it and the carbonic acid gas which comes from their own mouths.

Mrs. Buckton, in her "Health in the House," tells us of a veterinary surgeon of her acquaintance, who invariably found cows that were ill of fever or consumption living in "horridly dirty stables." "When he told the farmers that they must clean the place by taking out the dung and whitewashing the walls they only laughed at him." Is it any wonder that thousands of cows die every year of consumption, just as we should die in the same "environment?" And can milk from such diseased creatures be a fit drink for anyone?

Of the three drinks, tea, coffee, and cocoa, cocoa gives the most nourishment and tea the very least. Cocoa has so much fat in it that it does not suit bilious folk, but it is exceedingly good for most children, and, indeed, for anyone who likes it. There is a new kind of cocoa now being made from the African kola-nut, which is said to be quite as nourishing as that made from the cacao-bean. I do not know of any harm that cocoa and chocolate can do; but many is the warning given against coffee and tea. Both affect the nerves, but tea in addition to this opens the pores and carries off some of the substance of the body. A good thing this in the case of a fine lady who knows nothing of exercise, has eaten a big lunch, and is going to eat a bigger dinner! But what of a working-woman who has been washing or scrubbing since dinner-time? The cup of tea at first makes her feel comfortable and happy. It has soothed her nerves and given her pleasant warmth. But it has opened the pores, and in a short time it has all gone and she is colder and weaker than she was before, and besides there is danger of taking cold. A writer describes the action of tea and coffee as follows: "The nerves of the stomach are irritated, the brain is excited, the reserves of vital force are summoned to cast out the unwelcome intruder, and they create in the effort a short-lived sensation of increased energy. Whether this fictitious strength is induced by tea, coffee, opium, alcohol, or tobacco, makes but little difference. None of these stimulants form a drop of blood or create healthy strength. They can but relieve fatigue at the expense of ultimate exhaustion, and mortgage the future for the passing present gain."

If tea must be used—and it would require courage in some of us to give it up—let it be used in moderation, and never let it be strong. Not many months ago I was asked to take a young woman to be inspected by a doctor. She was pale, languid, and inclined to weep at the slightest provocation. She complained of violent palpitation, and, being at the romantic age, it seemed to her that nothing less than heart-disease was the cause. The doctor examined and questioned her with care. Then he said, "You have been taking too much tea, and taking it too strong." And he said that she must drink no more for some time to come. Milk, lime-water, cocoa, she might, and must have, and if it were a very great hardship to forego her tea all at once he would allow her one small cup of boiling water poured on and poured off again without the delay of a minute. The girl felt aggrieved at the loss of her tragic presentiments but—she recovered.

The safest way of making tea is the following: Let the teapot be well warmed and be perfectly dry within; put in the tea; pour boiling water upon it; and then pour out the beverage almost immediately. The water must be used just as it comes to boiling-point. Water which has been boiling or simmering for some time will not do. The teapot must be filled up at once. The old-fashioned plan was to "wet" the tea, let it stand to "draw," and then fill up with more water, boiling or otherwise. The longer the tea is allowed to soak the more surely will it "draw" out a deadly enemy whose name is tannic acid or tannin. For this reason it is better to use large cups, or to have a second supply of fresh tea made when wanted. Or, is there no one who will invent us a teapot from which the tea-leaves can be removed before they begin to do harm? Tannin hardens the albumen in the stomach and makes the food tough. It is used by tanners to turn skins into leather, but is not, therefore, adapted to digestive purposes.

I knew a servant-girl whose habit it was to make her tea in the afternoon, set the teapot on the hob, go upstairs to change her dress and "clean" herself, and, after perhaps a half-hour of toilette-labours, come down again to find her tea as she expressed it "just ready." She had a notion that by thus stewing it she got all the "good" out of it; whereas she could have got all the good in less than three minutes. After that nothing but "bad" was possible.

The conclusion of the whole matter is that grown-up people must do as they think best for themselves with regard to coffee and tea; but that those who have the care of children should keep them ignorant of the taste of anything that will hinder their present and future development.

In November of last year I wrote of rhubarb-tea for the children, of barley-water and oatmeal-drinks flavoured with jam. Let me add a word in favour of lime-juice, lemon-juice, and home-made lemonade (not the effervescing stuff which owes its liveliness to carbonic acid gas); and then conclude with a sentence found in a vegetarian paper: "Fresh fruit is at once meat and drink. Distilled from the dew and delicately flavoured with the spices of the sunshine it is the final answer for those who hunger and thirst."

ELIZABETH MARTYN.

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

MARCH, though it bears the name of Spring, is often a very cold month, and even on what Wordsworth calls "the first mild day of March" it is not expedient to make much

change in clothing. Spring, however, always brings a desire for a *clean* dress, which need not necessarily be new, but may often be a washed merino, cashmere, or serge, and, strange though it may sound, there are many inexpensive woollen materials, such as striped tans, fawns, and light browns, at about 8d. or 9d. a yard, that will wear for months, and wash at least twice and look almost as good as new again. Some of them look best when mangled, others when ironed on the wrong side, but all should be washed with plain good common soap and soft water, not wrung at all, but hung up dripping out of doors in a brisk breeze. If the soft water and the blow in the air cannot be had, the operation must be got through as speedily as possible, and the stuff dried indoors, but washing it one day and putting it by till the next day to dry is ruination.

In re-making such a dress as this, we must premise that most of it has been taken to pieces, except the foundation, and that the foot kilt has been unpleated and turned upside down, if at all worn or frayed; or, if past mending, a new one may be put on, of a darker shade, if there are no remnants of the material available. In making up, it is as well to remember that skirts are still worn a little longer than they have been, but quite clear the ground, and also that rows of trimming, whether braid or velvet, are much in favour, and that if judiciously used they completely take off the shabbiness of the lower part of a skirt, and prevent it from again showing soil very rapidly. Almost all skirts are now simply gathered and sewn on a round waist, and the fashion of making coat sleeves not over tight and with a longish puff at the shoulder, lends itself very much to the renovation of an old dress. A pretty new apron, that looks fresh and nice, often saves a dress a great deal, and a new but inexpensive invention is called the "bresque." It looks like any other apron with a bib, but there is a little bit of metal at the waist, attached to two other pieces, that keep the bib in its place without any necessity for using pins, which not only wear out the dress bodice, but sometimes scratch children, or the wearer herself. Two or three stitches fasten the bresque into any clean apron, and it is a decided improvement.

While on the subject of stitchery, we must mention the new "shield" thimble. It only costs 3d. or 4d., but is a great comfort. The curved shield runs upwards, cannot possibly be detached, and is a great help in heavy work, besides quite preventing the eye of the needle slipping from off the thimble and burying itself in the quick of the third finger.

Our sketch this month shows a very neat jacket of plain fawn cloth, cut straight down the front, so as only to fall in to the figure behind, with fancy cloth revers and cuffs in fawn and brown. Half a yard cut on the cross is sufficient of this, and the jacket can be made complete and these adjuncts laid on afterwards. The straps that fasten it should be threefold, with the cloth outside; then a piece of stiffening or stout holland, and lastly a lining of silk, sateen, or Italian cloth. They should then be bound round with braid of the same tint as the darkest shade in the fancy cloth, and this is even better done by hand than with the sewing machine.

The hat, with its bows of plain or watered ribbon, need not cost more than 4s. altogether, whether it be of felt or straw, or possibly last year's white straw dipped brown or black, a process which seldom costs more than 10d.

Ribbons are very cheap this season, and nothing can be neater. Gloves, too, are to be had at very moderate prices, the Jersey gloves being peculiarly useful, and made in many colours. In kid, the gusset thumbs are most flexible and useful.

The price of the jacket pattern is 9½d., which must be sent in stamps to M. L., at the office of THE MOTHERS' COMPANION. *Every effort will be made to despatch patterns promptly, but they cannot be sent by return of post.*